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PREFACE

THAT Chief of California Indians who told Dr. Benedict of the power of his people in the old days when they had eaten 'the health of the desert' made a profoundly interesting observation. /21

In the beginning, he said, God gave to every people a cup, a cup of clay, and from that cup they drank their life. . . . They all dipped in the water but their cups were different. Our cup is broken now. . . .[1]

The African peoples also have had their cups of clay or wood, or their gourd dippers. They have worked out their intricate and appropriate adaptations to their particular environments, a social structure well suited to their needs, and a remarkably successful system of education.

Now that Africa has come under Western influences, however, the environment has changed. In many cases the changes have been so rapid that the Africans by their own unaided efforts, and within the pattern of their cultures, are no longer able to make the necessary adaptations. The results in social disintegration are well described by the Umbundu proverb:

> Where the pot breaks, there also the potsherds remain.[2]

The broken pot no longer has either utility or beauty—is no more a pot, but only broken and scattered sherds. So it is also with a broken social group—only scattered individuals remain. This proverb refers primarily to a broken family, but thoughtful Ovimbundu are now applying it to their whole social structure.

Since the life of Africa has been thrust thus suddenly into the world's life, 'it becomes a problem of urgent importance, how, while introducing the European system . . . to conserve the very real values of the indigenous African system'.[3] The solution of this problem is a responsibility of Christian missions inasmuch as theirs is the responsibility for the greater part of the education of the Africans.

The Ovimbundu,[4] the people chosen for the present study, are /01

[1] Ruth Benedict, *Patterns of Culture*, p. 21 f. (Boston and N.Y.: Houghton Mifflin, 1934).

[2] *Pa fika ombia, haipo ovipa pa sioka.*

[3] E. W. Smith, *Essays presented to C. G. Seligman*, p. 334, quoted in the *Year Book of Education, 1935*, p. 697 (London: Evans).

[4] For explanation of terms and note on Orthography, p. xi.

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a Bantu-speaking group numbering about one and one third million, whose home is the Benguela Highland of Angola (Portuguese West Africa). Christian missions have worked among them since 1881, the date of founding of the W.C.A.M. of the A.B.C.F.M., with which work the writer has been connected since 1924.

Umbundu mentality. It is not the purpose of this study to appraise Bantu or Umbundu mentality. Every new description of a Bantu culture gives a new angle or vantage point from which to view the versatile mentality of that interesting group of people. All available objective views unite to show us, as Driberg holds for primitive man in general, 'a being as human as ourselves, affected by the same emotions . . . with thoughts, responses, and actions differing in no essential way from our own'[1]—neither the noble savage of Rousseau nor the subhuman creature of more recent doctrinaires. 'The grouping of savages with children and idiots is but another symptom of an attitude which, when faced with a different type of culture, insists on assuming a lower type of mentality to account for that culture.'[1]

It must be owned that different views of primitive mentality are held, but it would seem that those which hold primitive man to be incapable of reasoning logically, his mentality in some way inferior or 'pre-logical', base their conclusions too largely on theoretical or library material and too little on results of actual field work.[2] It is not the purpose of the present study to examine these theories, but a word of protest must be raised against some who, basing their view of the mentality of Bantu peoples on some such theories as those mentioned above, and with or without sup-

[1] J. H. Driberg, *The Savage as He Really Is*, pp. 2, 3 (London: Routledge, 1929).

[2] Cf., for example, L. Levy-Bruhl, *Les Fonctions Mentales dans les Sociétés Inférieures*, *Le Mentalité Primitive*, &c. The seriousness with which these and similar theoretical studies have been taken is surprising. Cf. e.g., R. Allier, *Mind of the Savage* (London: Bell, 1929); J. W. C. Dougall, *Characteristics of African Thought* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1932); N. S. Booth, *Teaching a Bantu Community* (MS. copy). Dr. Max Gluckman of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute told me that I had wrongly interpreted Levy-Bruhl, and he kindly loaned me a copy of a paper by Evans-Pritchard which sets forth a different interpretation of Levy-Bruhl's thesis with regard to the 'pre-logical' mentality. It is not my intention here to combat the thesis of the 'pre-logical' mentality, but rather a common interpretation of it (Evans-Pritchard, 'Levy-Bruhl's Theory of Primitive Mentality', *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the Egyptian University*, vol. i, pt. ii).

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NOTE ON ORTHOGRAPHY OF AFRICAN WORDS USED

Ovimbundu (pl.) is the name of the people (sing. *Ocimbundu*). *Umbundu* is the name of the language, of the culture, and the form of the descriptive adjective.

The orthography used in most particulars follows recommendations of the International African Institute.[1] The sounds of Umbundu are relatively simple. Each vowel has a single value—for practical purposes the same as in Spanish. The tilde over a vowel indicates nazalization; with *ñ* it indicates the velar *n*, i.e. the value of the English (or German) *ng* in 'singer'. The sound of the English *ch* in 'church' is represented by *c*. The consonants *g* and *j* are always hard; these two and also *d* appear always and only preceded by *n*,—*nd*, *ng*, and *nj*. Likewise *b* never appears alone but preceded by *m*,—*mb*. The other consonants have approximately the same values as in English; *w* and *y* are only used as consonants; *r*, *x* are not found except in foreign words.

I have retained the prefixes Oci-mbundu, Ovi-mbundu, and U-mbundu in accordance with the correct Umbundu usage and because it seems that in no other way can confusion with regard to the identity of this people be avoided. When the truncated form of 'Mbundu' is used even great scholars are led to confuse the Ovimbundu with the 'Kimbundu' of the Luanda hinterland.[2] These two peoples must not be confused: they are entirely distinct and even belong to different linguistic zones. An Umbundu Grammar by Dr. Merlin W. Ennis is to be published shortly by the University of Witwatersrand Press.

[1] *A Practical Orthography of African Languages* (London: International Institute of African Languages and Cultures, 1927); *Short Guide to the Recording of African Languages* (London: Ibid., 1933).

[2] See, for example, *Bantu Studies*, 1927, p. 373; E. W. Smith, 'Africa: what do we know of it?' *J.R.A.I.*, 1935, p. 71; D. W. Westermann, 'Study of African Languages', *Africa*, 1935, p. 80.

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Much of the soil has been greatly im-
134 poverished both by use and by the action of the weather. The most productive soil areas consist of alluvial deposits, but the precipitate nature of much of the region precludes the formation of such deposits. The bulk of the soil is rather poor, but still it is of better quality, on the whole, than in adjoining regions to the north, east, and south.[1]

133 In common with several of the African plateaux the Benguela Highland rises very precipitately from the sea. This is one of the most striking features of African geography. The steepness of the [48] ascent forces the Benguela Railway to use a cog-line for a short distance. The village of Ngendo, described in the section dealing with the social structure, has an elevation of about 1,650 metres (5,400 feet) but is situated at only about 60 miles from the ocean.[2] That part of the intermediate zone which adjoins the Highland on the west consists of river valleys between mountain ridges and is well watered, but between that and the sea the country is very arid. This arid region is in reality a northern extension of the Kalahari, Omaheke, and Namieb deserts. Much of this arid stretch is exceedingly rough mountainous country. All along the African coast there is a coastal plain, but in the region under consideration it is very narrow. Plain and mountain are equally arid and this desert country generally has an elevation of less than 1,000 metres (about 3,280 feet). This intermediate zone is well known to the Ovimbundu and played an important role in the history of their commercial developments since they were obliged to cross it to reach the European stations on the coast.

101 Other adjoining regions have also been of importance to the Ovimbundu. It was from the region to the north between the Highland and the Kuanza River that some of the principal ruling families came. Across this same region the Ovimbundu had their [177] first European contacts—with the Portuguese establishments on the Kuanza River. In the regions to the south live cattle-raising people whence the Ovimbundu got cattle, whether by raiding or 133 by trading. East of the Kuanza River valley the elevation drops 167 gradually toward the basins of the Congo and the Zambezi. When the slave- and rubber-trades led the Ovimbundu into this region

[1] I.e. of all adjoining regions only on the north-west are there valleys of superior soil. No complete survey of the soils of Angola has been made. Most books overrate the qualities of the soils of the colony.

[2] See *infra*, Chap. II.

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241 The Highland is evidently well suited to the particular type of
221 agriculture which the Ovimbundu carry on with upland fields for the principal crops of maize and beans growing in the rainy season and with river gardens for secondary cultures in the dry season. The purpose of the latter is to piece out between the principal harvests. The situation of the Highland across principal watersheds and therefore on convenient trade routes has been noted. This is doubtless one factor in commercial development among the
231 Ovimbundu. Cattle-keeping with them seems to be largely a commercial development. While cattle may live on the Highland, they thrive better in the less well-watered lands to the west and the south where the neighbouring peoples are cattle-keepers.

Neighbouring peoples

101 The cattle-keeping peoples who live just west and south of the
197 Ovimbundu are the Nganda, the Ndombe, the Hanya, the Cilenge, the Cipungu, the Muila, the Nyaneka, the Mulondo, and the Khumbi.[1] These peoples all seem to be related to each other and in some way to some, at least, of the Ovimbundu.[2] Still further south beyond these peoples are the Ambo and the Herero, also cattle-keepers. All these, together with the Ovimbundu, have been classified linguistically as making up the 'Western Province' of the Southern Bantu.[3] There are also a few Bushmen on the southern borders.

The peoples to the east and south-east of the Umbundu country are probably Lunda emigrants and so belong to the Congo group (Cokue and Songo) and to the Zambezi or Central group (Luimbi, Lucazi, Nyemba, Ngonzelo, &c.).[4] These people are lumped together by the Ovimbundu under the somewhat deprecatory term of *va Ngangela*.

The northern neighbours belong to the Western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo group (Esela, Cipala, Lupolo, Ndongo or

[1] See C. Estermann, 'Notas Etnográficas sôbre os povos indígenas do Distrito da Huila' (*Boletim Geral das Colónias*, Fev. 1935, pp. 41–69). He groups some of these people together under the name 'Bangala' or 'Ovambangala'.

[2] Information from Nganda, Mulondo, Cilenge, and Ovimbundu individuals.

[3] See R. A. Dart, 'Racial Origins', p. 23, in Schapera, op. cit., 1937; C. M. Doke, *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* (London: Longmans, 1935); Sir H. H. Johnston, *Comparative Vocabulary of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu Languages*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1919, 1922).

[4] Johnston, op. cit.

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'Kimbundu', Imbangala, &c.). The Esele and the Mbuí, on the north-west, may belong to the Western Province but they have not yet been surely classified.[1]

These neighbouring peoples have been listed only as background for studying the Ovimbundu. Linguistically the Ovimbundu belong to South Africa even as their country geographically is a part of it. 'In respect of climate and vegetation Angola is essentially a borderland and may be regarded as the area of mergence of several distinct zones which attain their fullest development outside the Colony.'[2] Since the Benguela Highland comprises the north-western ridges of the South African sub-continental plateau, it is not surprising that its inhabitants should be the northernmost of the Southern Bantu.[3]

European Administration, Communications, Missions

As a Portuguese colony, Angola is governed under the Ministry of Colonies in Lisbon by a Governor-General whose residence is Luanda, the capital of the colony since 1576. For administrative purposes the colony is divided into five provinces, each with a governor in charge. These are divided into thirteen districts which in turn are divided into circumscriptions and these again into administrative areas. The country of the Ovimbundu is divided between the provinces of Benguela, Bié, and Huila in the districts of Benguela, Huambo, Cuanza-Sul, Bié, and Huila. 'Direct rule' is the method of administration and native political

[1] Ibid.

[2] Walter Fitzgerald, *Africa, a Social, Economic and Political Geography of its Major Regions* (London: Methuen, 1934).

[3] The general census of 1940 (*vide supra*, p. 7, note 2) showed the population as follows:

Whites	44,083
Mixed	28,035
Blacks	3,665,829
Others	63
	3,738,010 (*op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 78 f.)

Of the various tribal divisions, the Ovimbundu ('Mbundo') are listed with 1,331,087 (*op. cit.*, vol. ix, p. 23). Owing to the mistaken inclusion of several small tribal groups, this number should probably be reduced by at least 150,000, but on the other hand there are without doubt more Ovimbundu than this last number who have emigrated to neighbouring colonies and to the Union of South Africa.

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Evidently royal persons could then be easily distinguished from the commoners.

The question naturally arises how far may a similar distinction be observed at the present time. The genealogical tables presented may answer the question. It may be seen that intermarriage of commoners and royalty has proceeded to such a degree that the differences have been greatly dimmed, if not quite erased. Furthermore, the loss of the political power which the royal families formerly held has levelled down distinctions until they have largely lost their meaning. This loss again has hastened the process of intermarriage with commoners. While there are some distinctive practices which persist, they may now pertain to or be practised by certain members of a family only, or in some instances, and not in others. These refer especially to inheritance and to the naming of children.

By 'social structure' is meant the more or less permanent framework of relationships between members of a community which manifests itself in an ordered group-life, with reciprocal rights and duties, privileges and obligations, of members, determining behaviour-patterns . . . and moulding the feelings, thoughts, and conduct of members according to these patterns, so that it is only in and through them that the individual can achieve his personal self-realization and participate in the satisfactions offered by the life of his community.

This framework of social organization, or social structure, is permanent compared with the stream of human lives that, in the succession of the generations, flows through it. Each new generation finds it there, as an inheritance from untold generations of his predecessors. Yet the framework of social structure is not absolutely rigid or fixed for all time, but is itself a thing of growth, capable of variation in detail, sometimes giving birth to new developments, at other times undergoing disintegration and decay.[1]

The genealogical tables which I have collected are fairly representative of the major divisions or 'tribes' of the Ovimbundu. The only 'tribes' not represented are those of the border regions of Namba, Sanga, Cikomba, and Kalukembe, none of which save the last are numerically important. These border groups themselves offer an interesting field of study and particularly in that they may provide cultural and linguistic bridges between the Ovimbundu and their neighbors.

[1] A. W. Hoernlé in Schapera, *The Bantu-Speaking Tribes of South Africa* (London: Routledge, 1937), p. 67 f.

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PART THREE

CHAPTER XII

HISTORICAL

000 'HEUREUX les peuples qui n'ont pas d'histoire', quotes Father Van Wing in introducing his *Études Bakongo*, and having noted that the Kongo people 'had entered into history' in 1482 with the discovery of the River Congo.[1] It is very doubtful whether there are any people, however primitive, or however remote or inaccessible their dwelling, who could qualify for that blessed state. If this characterization means entering upon the stage of continuous contact with Europe and Europeans, it may mark a definite stage in the life of this people.

175 101 The Ovimbundu have not in this sense as old a 'history' as have the Kongo people. Their first contacts with Europeans probably took place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries before their formation as a people—before they were Ovimbundu; but it was from the second or third quarter of the eighteenth century that they began to have regular and constant contacts which have continued with increasing frequency down to the present day.

Pre-History

172 The pre-history of the Umbundu country awaits competent investigation and should prove a fruitful field. Dr. Merlin W. Ennis has collected stone artifacts from several sites, but chiefly from Elende (twelve miles north of the railway station of Cuma), some of which have been placed in the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, some in the Logan Museum of Beloit College (Wisconsin), and some in the National Museum of Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. These artifacts have been classified as similar to those of the Chellean culture.[2] The strata from which they

[1] R.P. Van Wing, S.J., *Études Bakongo* (Bruxelles: Goemaere, 1921), p. 1.

[2] For a description, see J. J. Williams, S.J., *Africa's God* (Boston College, 1937), V. Congo and Angola, p. 96; also W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola* (Field Museum, 1934), p. 207. Several Portuguese and Belgian writers have described stone artifacts found near the northern borders of Angola, comparing them with examples discovered at various sites in the Congo. See *Trabalhos do I° Congresso Nacional de Antropologia Colonial*, Pôrto, 1934: J. R. Santos, Jr., 'Rui de Serpa Pinto e a arqueologia de Angola', pp. 433–51;

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172 fied towns of the natives as *quipacas*, a word adapted from the Umbundu word *ocimbaka*, meaning a wall. The word for the palisade with which their villages are now enclosed is *olumbo*. Until evidence is adduced to the contrary, it seems that we must conclude that the stone-walled ruins found throughout the Umbundu country were built by Ovimbundu or by their immediate (Bantu) predecessors. As the ruins of Rhodesia and Mozambique seem to have been built by Bantu under Arab or Malay influences, so the Ovimbundu may have modelled their fortifications on the Portuguese forts which they had seen at Caconda, at the coast, along the Kuanza River, or even the walls with which individual traders fortified their establishments. These various forts were first built between 1575 and 1603, and it is probable that individual Ovimbundu themselves took part in some of the building operations.

Tribal Divisions of the Ovimbundu

631 Before going on with Umbundu history let us fix in mind the
101 principal kingdoms, tribes, or divisions of the Ovimbundu and their present location with reference to one another and to their other neighbours. This may most easily be seen with the aid of the accompanying map.[1] Their mutual relations prior to effective Portuguese occupation, whether of dependence or independence, are also shown. These are the divisions the Ovimbundu were found to have at the beginning of the present century, and these are the divisions still recognized by them, although they no longer retain their former political significance. It is of interest to find that according to Ladislau Magyar, who lived in and travelled through the Umbundu country from 1849 until 1857,[2] essentially these same divisions were then in existence. Under date of 1 August 1799 the Governor of Benguela reported on the 'provinces' and people in the hinterland.[3] It is significant to find that the divisions of the Ovimbundu were then essentially the same as they are

[1] Facing p. 164.

[2] Ladislau Magyar, *Reisen in Süd-Afrika* (tr. Hunfalvy), Pesth, 1859. Magyar made 'Quipeyo' (Cipeyo) a part of Bailundu and Sambu a sort of tributary. 'Quibala' (Civula), he said, paid tribute to 'Quiyaka' (Ciyaka).

[3] See *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes*, 4a Ser., pp. 147–61 (*parte não official*). This report made 'Quipeyo' tributary to Huambo, 'Ondure' (Ndulu) to Bailundu. Several kingdoms, later tributaries of Ciyaka, were listed as independent.

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101 631 to-day.[1] The principal Umbundu-speaking groups may be listed as follows:

I. *Independent kingdoms* (in approximate order of their present population):

Mbailundu (*Bailundo*).
Viye (*Bie* or *Bihe*).
Wambu (*Huambo*, *Huamba*, or even *Hambo*).
Ciyaka (*Quiyaca* or *Quiaca*).
Ngalangi (*Galangue*).
Civula[2] (*Quibula*).
Ndulu[2] (*Andulo*, *Ondulo* or even *Ondura*).
Cingolo (*Quingolo*).
Kalukembe (*Caluquembe*, *Caluguembe*, or even *Caluqueme*).
Sambu[2] (*Sambo* or *Sambos*).
Ekekete (*Quiquete*).
Kakonda or Cilombo-coñoma (*Caconda* or *Quilombo*).
Citata (*Quitata*).

[636] II. *Kingdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the kingdoms to which they owed allegiance*:

Kasongi (*Cassongue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Ngalanga (*Galanga*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Civanda (*Quibanda*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Namba—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Sanga—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cenge (*Chiengue*)—generally a tributary of Bailundu.
Cipeyo (*Quipeyo*)—a tributary of Bailundu or Wambu.
Mbongo (*Bongo*)—generally a tributary of Wambu.
Elende (*Lende*)—generally a tributary of Ciyaka.

167 174 Nearly all of these groups are listed in the report of 1799 to which we have referred, and many of them may be identified on the map of 1776. How long before that had they lived in these their present homes? Since it is already well established that none of the Southern Bantu are autochthonous, we shall not stop to ask

[1] Neither of these accounts mentioned Kasongi, which, according to genealogical evidence, is probably one of the most recently formed of the Umbundu-speaking groups. Both accounts made the non-Umbundu-speaking regions of 'Quibala' (Cipala), Mussende, and Cella tributaries of Bailundu. This was the state of affairs as late as 1893.

[2] See *supra*, p. 167, n. 2.

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and Mossamedes. The region of Catumbela, and perhaps of Benguela, seems to have been subjected to migrations of Ovimbundu, or of proto-Ovimbundu, between the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, and it is probable that some of these groups early established themselves there permanently.[1] At the present time peoples of many tribes make up the population of these towns and of the surrounding regions, but Umbundu is already the dominant speech, and in Lobito and Catumbela almost no other Bantu language is heard. Certain other areas on the fringe of the Umbundu lands now seem to be in process of 'Umbunduization', at least as regards language. This does not seem to have taken place in Musende, in Cipala (Quibala), or in Sela, in spite of the long time during which they owned the king of Bailundu as their overlord. Just now, however, such a process seems to be taking place in Mbuiva (Amboiva), in Cisanji (area of Bocoio), in Nganda, and in Cikomba (Chicomba, south of Caconda).

Some of the neighbouring peoples have traditions of migrations which corroborate the traditions of the Ovimbundu. The Nganda say that they formerly lived in the region of Wambu, around the rocks of Nganda-la-Kawe, and that they moved down-country for two reasons: (1) to escape Wambu-Kalunga and his penchant for eating their children; (2) to be by themselves to practise the rite of circumcision. When they migrated to their present home, the kingdom of Ciyaka, they say, was not yet established.

Traditions of the Herero and Ambo peoples may have bearing on the problem of the migrations of the Ovimbundu. Dr. Vedder concludes from tradition and genealogical evidence that the Herero must have crossed the Kunene 'about the year 1700'.[2] Some of the tribes of Angola with which the Njimba-Herero claim relationship[3] may easily be identified as belonging to the 'Bangala' group, as, for example, the Ovangambue, the Ovangumbi, and the Ovatjerenge, which are plainly the va Ngambue, the va Khumbi (or Nkhumbi), and the va Cilengi, respectively. Other names in the list are very much like some place-names in the Umbundu country.

Traditions of the Songo and Lunda people have already been

[1] According to a Ciyaka tradition. Also see A. Bastos, *Monographia de Catumbella*, pp. 6, 7; L. Cordeiro (ed.), *Benguella e seu sertão*, 1617–22; Ravenstein (ed.), op. cit., p. 19 f.

[2] Hahn *et al.*, op. cit., p. 157.

[3] Loc. cit.

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mentioned. H. A. Dias de Carvalho collected the traditional history of the people of Lunda, which attempted to show that the Imbangala, the Songo, and the Cokue, or rather their reigning families, were descended from the royal house of the Bongo people of Lunda.[1] Through Ilunga, father of the first Muata Yanvo, this author connects these people, or at least all of them except the Imbangala, with the Luba.[2] Torday offers the hypothesis that Ilunga (or Ihunga) may have been a Bushongo prince.[3] I have heard the hypothesis offered that the Songo were in effect an offshoot of the Bushongo people, but it seems that such knowledge as we have of the Songo cannot be said to substantiate this theory. Should these theories prove to accord with the facts, we could claim a long traditional descent for the people of our study in consideration of the careful work done by Torday in tracing the genesis of the Bushongo.[4]

, *Historical Evidence.* Turning from tribal traditions to the solid ground of historical evidence, regarding the migrations in question, it is immediately evident that there is no lack of witnesses. The regions with which we are dealing have been known to Europe since 1482, when the expedition under Diogo Cão first sailed up the Congo River and sent ambassadors representing King John II of Portugal to the king of Kongo. Diogo Cão returned in 1485–6, and then in 1491 there came a great expedition with a specially appointed embassy and a mission of ten Franciscan friars.[5] From this time on the Kongo was not without European observers. The earliest record which we have of native migrations in what is now Angola was the invasion of the kingdom of Kongo in 1568,[6] when it was overrun by hordes of terrible 'Jagas',[7] from the east. The reigning king, Dom Alvaro I (Nenemi-a-lukeni-luambemba), and his forces were so utterly routed that his only resource was to

[1] Dias de Carvalho, op. cit., p. 76 f.

[2] Op. cit., p. 65.

[3] E. Torday, *On the Trail of the Bushongo*, pp. 170, 281.

[4] Ibid., chap. xiii.

[5] See João de Barros, *Decadas* I, liv. 3; Ruy de Pina, *Chronica*, p. 174 f.; Garcia de Resende, *Chronica*, pp. 155 ff.; Fr. Luiz de Sousa, *História de S. Domingos*, pt. ii, liv. vi, c. 8.

[6] There has been considerable disagreement over this date, which has been variously reported as 1558, 1568, and 1570; 1568 seems the most likely date, see Ravenstein (ed.), *The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell*, p. 119 f.

[7] There are many spellings of this name, according to the language, or even the caprice, of the observer. The commoner forms are: Jagas, Jakas, Iagges, Giaghi, Giaki, and Ayaka. This last is probably the more nearly correct.

1: Childs M-5 (1924-1940) 1949 FP 13 Mbundu FP 13

with that which has already been reviewed, might make it possible to determine the demography of the Benguela Highland prior to the formation of the Umbundu kingdoms. It is also further evidence as to the demographic make-up of the Ovimbundu. Some of these recurring place-names evidently represent elements which now constitute separate entities outside the Umbundu kingdoms, although they probably made contributions to the formation of those kingdoms. Others represent elements which probably moved away from the earlier invasions from the north but stayed in their new sites to amalgamate with later arrivals. Some may represent successive splittings-off from a stock which thus settled at various places. Many recurrent place-names could be shown both in this region and outside the language-grouping.

Attitudes toward Other Tribes. Attitudes of the Ovimbundu towards the various neighbouring tribes are instructive. Mention has already been made of the attitude of the southern 'Bangala' people in their inclusion of the Ovimbundu of Kalukembe within their own system of exogamy. The Ovimbundu recognize a common humanity with the peoples who are their neighbours both on the south and on the north. They are all *omanu*,[1] people, or even *vakuetu*, comrades. Similar recognition is not extended to the eastern and south-eastern neighbours who are lumped together under the derogatory term of 'va Ngangela' or *ovingangela*.[2] This eastern region as far as the Great Lakes was the happy hunting-ground of the slave-traders from Viye and from Bailundu. There is a term *olongoya* which is applied to the northern neighbours, but without the derogatory connotation of 'Ngangela'. *Olongoya* has a linguistic connotation as did *barbaroi* in the Greek, and refers to the fact that these neighbours speak what is to the Ovimbundu an unintelligible language. How much of rationalization there may be in these attitudes and prejudices one cannot say, but it seems that in them there is some recognition of tribal origins and relationships, of the fact that across the Benguela Highland migrations have swept from north to south.

Conclusion. In consideration of the above evidence, it is now possible to draw conclusions concerning the origin of the Ovi-

[1] *Omanu* is the Umbundu equivalent for the Nguni *abantu*, which has come to be applied to the whole language family.

[2] This Umbundu attitude is best illustrated by the proverb 'As a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* (singular) is not a person (*omunu*).'

a	b
c	f
e	d

Chart of positions of sections of End Map.

THE OVIMBUNDU OF ANGOLA

GROUPING AND DEMOGRAPHY

NOMENCLATURE

101 The name *Ovimbundu*, which possibly derives from the same root as *muntu*, seems to have been adopted as a tribal name in fairly recent times, the various groups being formerly known separately as Bailundu, Ciyaka, Viye etc. Correct rendering in native usage is *Ovimbundu* (singular *Ocimbundu*).[1] variations include *mbundo*, *m'bundo*, *vimbundo*, *quimbundo*, *kimbunda*[2] etc. *Umbundu* is correctly used adjectivally and to refer to the language.[3] In referring to the tribe the prefixes *Ovi-* and *Oci-* are usually retained today to avoid confusion with the *Kimbundu* (also called *Ambundu*, *Ngola* or *Ndongo*) tribe, located north of the Ovimbundu in Luanda, and related linguistically to the peoples of the Kongo group.[4]

The terms *Vakunanno* (*Vakonano*, *Vanano*, or *Munano*) and *Ovimbali* (*Mbari*, *Mambari*, *Mbali*) are sometimes used in the literature as alternative names for the Ovimbundu. *Nano* means "up-country", *Vakunanno* "people of the north".[5] Both van Bulck[6] and Guthrie[7] give it as an alternative name for the Ovimbundu as a whole, while earlier writers restrict its application to one or other group within the tribe. Thus Serpa Pinto[8] and Capello and Ivens[9] use it for the inhabitants of the southern part of the plateau, between Caconda and Cilenge country.[10] Magyar, on the other hand, uses it as an alternative name for the Bailundu group, who "because of their bravery, are celebrated far and wide, under the feared name *Munano*".[11]

Mbali, or more correctly *Ovimbali*, is correctly an Umbundu term for those who imitate Europeans, or who live near European towns, which are collectively called *lupali*.[12] It is frequently used by early writers for example, by Livingstone,[13] to refer to the Ovimbundu of the trading caravans.

GROUPING

101 631 The Ovimbundu do not have a centralised political organisation, but are divided into a number of chiefdoms, each traditionally under the control of a paramount chief. The following list of chiefdoms is quoted

(1) Childs, 1949, p.xi.
(2) Magyar uses *kimbunda* for the Ovimbundu, but he does not confuse them, as Jaspert does, with the *Kimbundu* people.
(3) Childs, *loc.cit.*
(4) Ibid. Capello and Ivens, 1882 (vol.I, p.15) use *m'bundo* for the language of the Ovimbundu, to distinguish it from the *n'bundo* of Luanda. They give *quimbundo* as an alternative for *n'bundo*, and state that it is a dialect of the *lu-anno* language.
(5) Childs, personal communication.
(6) 1949, p.179. (7) 1948.
(8) 1881, vol.I, pp.96, 219. (9) 1882, vol.I, p.37.
(10) See also Chatelain, 1894, p.6 and Marquardsen 1930, map.
(11) 1859, p.385.
(12) Childs, 1949, p.19. (13) 1857, pp.91, 371, 386 etc. See also White, 1949.

2

101
131

from Childe's monograph,(1) alternative spellings which occur in the literature being given in brackets. These divisions closely resemble those described in 1799 by the Governor of Benguella,(2) and by Magyar, who lived in and travelled through Ovimbundu country from 1840 to 1857. Ovimbundu today still think of themselves as belonging to one or other of these groups, although owing to the decay of the power of the chiefs, the divisions have largely lost their political significance.(3) Of the twenty-two Ovimbundu chiefdoms, about half were generally tributary to one or other of the larger and more powerful groups, prior to effective Portuguese occupation.(4)

I. *Independent chiefdoms (in approximate order according to the size of their present populations).*

Mbailundu	(Bailundu, bellundo, Balundo, Ballundo)
Viye	(Ovi Ye, Bie, Bihe, Biemo, Bihemo)
Wambu	(Huambu, Huambo, Wambo)
Ciyaka	(Quiyaca, Quieca)
Ngalangi	(Galangue, Galange, Galangi, Ngalangi)
Civula	(Quibula)
Ndulu	(Andulo, Ondulo, Ondura)
Cingolo	(Quingolo)
Kalukembe	(Calucuembe, Calugumbe, Caluquembe)
Sambu	(Sambo, Sambos)
Ekekete	(Quiqueta)
Kakonda or Cilombo-cowest	(Cacconda or Quilombo)
Citata	(Quitata)

II. *Chiefdoms generally tributary but not integral parts of the chiefdoms to which they owed allegiance.*

Kasongi(5)	(Cassongue).	Generally tributary to Bailundu.
Ngalanga	(Galanga)	" " " "
Civumbo	(Quibumba)	" " " "
Numbo		" " " "
Sanga		" " " "
Cenge	(Chienge)	" " " "
Cipeyo	(Quipeyo)	" " " "
		or Wambu.
Bongo	(Bongo).	Generally tributary to Wambu.
Elendo	(Lembo).	" " " Ciyaka.

LOCATION

The homeland of the Ovimbundu is the Benguella Highland in west central Angola. Strictly speaking, the Highland comprises those regions which have

(1) 1940, p. 168.
(2) Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes, 4a. Ser., pp.167-181. (Quoted by Childe)
(3) Childe, personal communication.
(4) I.e. prior to about 1900.
(5) Kasongi is not mentioned by Magyar, and Childe believes it to be one of the most recently-formed groups of Ovimbundu.

3

an elevation of 4,000 feet or more, and the boundaries of Ovimbundu territory closely correspond with this area.(1) Ovimbundu are found also in regions adjoining the Highland, and Umbundu-speaking groups stretch as far as the Atlantic coast-line, between the towns of Loanda and Benguella. Ovimbundu country is divided between the Administrative Provinces of Bie, Benguella, and Huila, in the Districts of Benguella, Humbo, Cuanza Sul, Bie and Huila.

NEIGHBOURING TRIBES

To the east and south-east of the Ovimbundu are the Luimbe, Luchaze, Mbunda, Mbwela, etc., for all of whom the Ovimbundu use the derogatory term *Ngangela*, or *Ganguella* in the Portuguese version.(2) The Ovimbundu attitude towards these people is illustrated in the proverb "as a grass hut is not a house, so an *ocingangela* is not a person".(3) This eastern region was a favourite hunting-ground for slave-traders from Viye and Bailundu.

To the north-east are the Chokwe, Bangala and Songo peoples, who are related to the Lunda group.(4)

To the west and south of the Ovimbundu are cattle-keeping peoples - the Nganda, Ndombe, Henya, Cilenge, Cipungo, Huila, Nyaneka, Mulondo and Khumbi. These form a fairly homogeneous cultural group, and are in certain respects similar to the southern Ovimbundu.(5) Childs, following Estermann,(6) uses the collective name "Benguela" in referring to them, but in order to avoid confusion with the Bangala tribe to the north-east, this usage is not adopted here. Still further south are the Ambo and Herero, also cattle-keepers.

The tribes to the north of the Ovimbundu - Esela, Cipela, Lupolo, Ndongo or Kimbundo etc. - belong to the western or Angola 'cluster' of the Congo people.(7) The Esele (Vessele) and Mbui (Amboim) may also belong to this group, but have not yet been surely classified.(8) The northern tribes are sometimes collectively called by the Ovimbundu *Olongoya*, a term which implies that they speak a language unintelligible to the Ovimbundu, but which has not the derogatory sense of "*Ngangela*".(9) Unlike the eastern peoples, the peoples to the south and north of the Ovimbundu are recognised as *ocamu* (people), or even *wakuetu* (comrades).(10)

DEMOGRAPHY

The 1940 Angola Census(11) estimates the number of Ovimbundu (Mbundo) as 1,331,087, of whom 694,504 are females, 636,583 males. Childs(12) points out that this number should be decreased by at least 150,000 owing to the erroneous inclusion of several small non-Ovimbundu tribal groups.

(1) See map. (2) See McCulloch, 1951, p.32.
(3) The term used for "person" in the proverb is *ocamu*, a "potential" person - a word used for adolescents. See pp. below.
(4) The Bangala are sometimes held to be related to the Congo rather than the Lunda group.
(5) See below, p. (6) 1935, pp.45-69.
(7) Childs, 1949, p.8. (8) Ibid.
(9) Ibid., p.189. (10) Ibid. p.9.
(11) Quoted by Mendes Correia, 1942, p.423, and Bermudes, 1948.
(12) 1949, p.9.

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

The coastal strip

131 was at times traversed by the Ovimbundu who know of the sea and
484 call it *kalunga*. Bihéan caravans crossed to the coast with slaves, as history shows, but the nature of the coastal strip marks it as a western barrier limiting the expansion of the Ovimbundu in that direction. The coast line itself is of the greatest moment in the consideration of historical factors. From Loanda, Benguela, and
[177] Mossamedes on the coast, the Portuguese penetrated the interior, so making contacts with the Ovimbundu to the encouragement of caravan trade. The importance of this European contact will be seen in subsequent chapters.

The south and southwest parts of Angola are of particular importance in studying the contacts of the Ovimbundu, but to give here the details of the wealthy cattle-keeping culture of these regions, which were accessible through peaceful proximity, trade, and occasional raiding, would be an anticipation of chapter X, "Culture Contacts."
[123] One topographical point is of primary importance; namely, the ease with which the Ovimbundu could descend from their strongholds to the low-lying land of the west and south, whereas the reverse journey is much more difficult for a people unaccustomed to manoeuvring and finding their way among hills.

• 101 Having described the northern, central, western, and southern areas, there remains only the eastern section to consider; this presents
[133] several features of peculiar geographical and ethnological interest. The eastern section of Angola is either slightly undulating or flat,
[136] the general characteristic is dryness, and vegetation is somewhat sparse though sufficient to shelter many kinds of antelope.

The major population is the Vachokue, a warlike, hunting people, who follow agricultural pursuits but slightly, and do not keep cattle. Examination of the literature describing early exploration indicates
[126] the truculent nature of these eastern people with whom caravans of Ovimbundu were in frequent conflict. Umbundu caravans crossed this country when making their way to Rhodesia, culture contacts with which are discussed in chapter X.

The results of contact of Ovimbundu and Vachokue tribes, so far as physical miscegenation is concerned, are mentioned in chapter "Physical Appearance"; while the social effects of slavery resulting from hostilities are described in chapter VI, "Social Life."

174 Rhodesia is a cattle-raising country, but the hostility of the
231 Vachokue, the great distance from central Angola to Rhodesia, and the general dryness of the country to be crossed, discourage the idea that the Ovimbundu obtained their cattle from Rhodesia. If it is

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III. HISTORICAL SOURCES

The object of this chapter is the presentation of a summary of literature relating to Angola from A.D. 1500 down to the present day. In this literature there may be accounts of the movements of tribes which will throw some light on the origin of the Ovimbundu, and the date of their migration into the Benguela Highlands. Present-day tradition of the Ovimbundu is unanimous in declaring that the tribe came from the northeast of its present locality, but some historical justification of this belief is desirable. The word Ovimbundu ("people of the fog") may refer to the heavy morning mists of highland regions, and there is the possibility that the Ovimbundu adopted this name when they settled on the high plateau.

If there is historical evidence in favor of the traditional home of the Ovimbundu being the region of the north and northeast of Angola, what was the ethnological background of these areas at the time when the Ovimbundu became detached from a matrix of northern Angolan tribes? In other words, what cultural factors are the Ovimbundu likely to have brought with them into the Benguela Highlands? The ultimate origin of these factors is a point which has not been neglected (chapter XI, "Wider Culture Contacts"), but for the moment the primary concern is the historical background of the Ovimbundu, with special reference to tribal movements and cultural traits.

As part of this historical inquiry, contacts of the Portuguese and the Ovimbundu are of importance. When and where did the Portuguese come into contact with the Ovimbundu and with what results to the indigenous culture?

Chapters IV–IX deal exclusively with my field work among the Ovimbundu in 1929. Therefore it is pertinent to ask to what extent the ethnological observations of travelers and early explorers will corroborate the information recorded in my own notes. Will there be contradiction or confirmation of personal observations? Possibly the ethnological notes obtained from historical sources will serve, not merely to corroborate my field work, but actually to extend the area of occurrence of important cultural traits which I noted in 1929.

The literature describing Angolan history and customs is here presented in the form of a chronological bibliography, which is annotated so as to emphasize points bearing on the purpose of this historical analysis. That there should be a fragmentary presentation of data is an inevitable consequence of the nature of the literature

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunda FP13

The kernel of the migratory problem of the Ovimbundu is reached when Torday traces out the history of the Kimbundu, for the Kimbundu are present-day neighbors of the Ovimbundu, to whom they are closely allied in language and culture (*ovi* is a Bantu plural prefix, which was perhaps used to express the inclusion of Kimbundu and Babunda under the general name Ovimbundu).

Torday's sifting of the historical evidence results in the conclusion that the Kimbundu came from the northeast, fighting their way to the Luando. These Kimbundu divided, with civil war as a consequence. One section crossed the river Kwanza, south of which they specialized in agriculture after becoming sedentary. Their sub-chief they called the *Kalunga*, which is the present-day word used by the Ovimbundu in greeting their chiefs. Traditions of the Ovimbundu point to the northeast as a center from which they spread at least ten generations ago. The rise of the powerful kingdom of Lunda dates from the seventeenth century, and although the details of this concentration of power in northeast Angola are unknown the general effects are understood. There was a great displacement of tribes in a southerly and southwesterly direction. In connection with the suggestion that the Ovimbundu came from the northeast of Angola, there is the necessity for recording the absence of even a fragment of historical evidence or tribal tradition indicating that the Ovimbundu came from the south or the east of Angola.

Cultural affinities of the Ovimbundu with tribes of the southwest Congo in particular, and with western Bantu culture in general, strongly support the foregoing deductions from historical sources (chapter X).

There is a probability that tribal disturbances resulting from the rise of the Lunda Empire led to a spread of the Vachokue over eastern Angola. Some of the effects of this contact have already been mentioned in chapter II, where contacts of the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue were discussed. The journey brought me into contact with the Vachokue at Cangamba, Katokn, and Ngalangi, of which Cangamba is the most easterly.

Witnessing of initiation ceremonies combined with observation of physique, language, and artifacts, leads me to agree with Torday that Cangamba is probably the ancient center of Vachokue culture. As one proceeds from Cangamba westward this type of culture becomes thinner as the borders of the country occupied by the Ovimbundu are approached. On the border line between the cultures of the Vachokue and the Ovimbundu, notably at Ngongo near Ngalangi,

174 there is tribal and cultural miscegenation. Both Umbundu and
171 Vachokue languages are spoken; boys of Ngalangi were seen to wear
[181] initiation costumes similar to those worn at Cangamba by the Vachokue, but on proceeding farther westward into territory exclusively occupied by the Ovimbundu, such initiation ceremonies are either absent or attenuated in ritual.

144 Elende, one center of research among the Ovimbundu, repre-
101 sents the purest Umbundu speech and culture observable at the present day. But in chapter IV some physical resemblance of the Ovimbundu to the Vachokue is noted. Warfare commonly resulted in the taking of slaves, a fact which might account for an apparent infusion of Vachokue blood in some of the Ovimbundu.

174 The historical data suggest a northern or northeastern starting
167 point of Umbundu migrations. Therefore an inquiry into the ethnology of these areas will be useful in showing the kind of culture with which the Ovimbundu were in contact before their settlement in the Benguela Highlands. If historical sources disclose the nature of northern Angolan culture from the year A.D. 1500 onward, such evidence can then be considered in relation to cultural traits of the Ovimbundu at the present day.

The establishment of strong cultural resemblances between extant Umbundu culture and older cultural patterns of northern Angola, would tend to strengthen the evidence of history respecting the northern origin of the Ovimbundu.

131 The regions dealt with in the following summary of ethnological
174 facts are the Cabinda Enclave to the north of the Congo estuary, the region of San Salvador, the hinterlands of Loanda and Benguela, and the area of northern Angola between Lat. 7° and 9° S. and Long. 13° to 22° E. This covers the whole area with which the Ovimbundu are likely to have been in contact before entering their present home.

175 My survey begins with the observations of Andrew Battell in
101 1596. His account deals mainly with the northwestern part of Angola, a country bordering on and actually including territory now occupied by the Ovimbundu, who in all probability came in contact with the Jaggas, whose habits of life are described by Battell.

Torday and Joyce identify the Jaggas with the present-day Bayaka, whose cultural resemblances to the Ovimbundu are examined later. In my opinion, the Jaggas correspond well with the Bihéan section of the Ovimbundu, an itinerant and exceedingly warlike people.

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The foregoing facts, when compared with field work among the Ovimbundu, indicate that the old culture of the Congo and northern Angola bears a strong resemblance to Umbundu culture at the present day. A more detailed analysis of this resemblance is made in chapter X.

The following notes dealing with exploration in Angola (1800–1930) are adduced for critical comparison with my own observations among the Ovimbundu.

The work of Sir R. F. Burton describing the exploration of Lacerda and other Portuguese pioneers, is more useful for geographical than for ethnological information. Lacerda's journey to Caambe, south of Lake Moero, was performed in 1798. A mention of veneration for the dead and consultation of the deceased on all occasions of war or of good fortune, is made (p. 127). These are important points in the present tribal life of the Ovimbundu.

Bowditch (1824) writes from information given to him by Almeida and Saldanha. There are valuable references to the Vacilenge, a people adjacent to the Ovimbundu, who refused to kill their cattle, "rather than do which they will endure famine to extremity." This note was made about Long. 15° E. and Lat. 15° S. (p. 34). The cattle were milked, and cattle-raiding by the Ovimbundu was common at this time. Many present-day Ovimbundu do not milk their cattle, but the Vacilenge still follow their milking custom observed before 1824.

Livingstone's journey through northeast and northern Angola in 1853 contains references to the Vachokue who seemed bent on plunder (I, p. 370). Livingstone noted cotton spinning, which I recorded as an occupation of males of the Ovimbundu at Elende. Livingstone, like other early travelers, encountered caravans of Bihéans (Ovimbundu) bearing elephants' tusks and beeswax, commodities, which, along with slaves, formed the chief merchandise of these caravans from the Benguela Highlands (p. 466). Livingstone notes and sketches (Plate XIII, Fig. 10) the double-handled hoe (p. 442) which is still used.

J. J. Monteiro (I, p. 61) saw the poison ordeal administered. The poison itself was prepared from the thick hard bark of a large tree (*Erythrophloeum guineense*). The place of observation was Mongue Grande, just south of the Congo estuary, and again Monteiro was present when the poison cup was given to two women at Ambrisette. Of this ordeal there is more to be said when discussing the culture contacts of the Ovimbundu, because the ordeal is a basic factor of

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

He draws the crescentic arrowhead (p. 123) still common among the Ovimbundu and Vachikue; the double iron gong (p. 122); and the musical bow, which he calls a viola (p. 121). 175 114 [534]

Sogaur states that iron-working had an advanced technique at Dindo, more than half a century ago. According to Sogaur, the blacksmith was using scrap iron from European sources (II, p. 14). 175 326

Perhaps the most valuable of Chatelain's books is "Fifty Folk Tales of Angola." The stories are accompanied by translations and ethnological notes, the most important of which are references to the carrying of a corpse on a pole; the building of a cairn of stones over the corpse of a hunter; matrilineal descent and the power of the maternal uncle over the persons of his nieces and nephews (sisters' children). My observations included some details respecting the pawning of a sister's children to redeem the debts of their mother's brother. Chatelain adds that sisters' children are successors to private property and chieftainship (pp. 8-10). My notes agree that property is inherited by children of a deceased man's sister, but my informants said that a new chieftain is normally the eldest son of the principal wife of the dead chief. Chatelain's folklore stories, fifty in number, relate chiefly to animals; this was the only kind of story told to me, but W. C. Bell has recorded a few tales of another type. 173 [114] [764] [611] [604] [429] [538]

Marquardsen (1928) devotes only one-fourth of his book to the ethnology of Angola, which he treats in a very general way; there is no section dealing specifically with any particular tribe. The author calls attention to Chapman's observation of rock paintings of South African Bushman type, between Cuma and Luimbale in northwest Angola. I have elsewhere remarked on the occasional occurrence of physical types which show a strain of Bushman blood. Today Bushmen penetrate southern Angola from the Kalahari (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2), but their presence in times past or present does not affect the course of history or the data of ethnology to an appreciable extent. 114 177 [531] [144]

Marquardsen gives some notes of a general kind on Vaheneca, Mahuila and other tribes of southwest Angola. The suggestion is feasible that the Umbundu name Suku, for a supreme being, is the same as the Nzambi of Lunda and the Congo. Marquardsen refers to the importance of the maternal uncle in Umbundu society, to the poison ordeal, and to the burial of an Umbundu chief in oxhide, all of which points were recorded in my observations at Elende. 114 101

Ferreira Diniz's book is unobtainable, but, judging from the summary given in *Anthropos* (XX, 1925, pp. 321-331), the information was collected by a questionnaire widely distributed among adminis-

3. Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FF13 Mbundu FP13

114 trative posts. I agree that people between Caconda and Huila
101 represent a racial mixture of the Ovimbundu and the Ovambo. The
record speaks of painting-houses for girls at Cabinda, an item which agrees with reports from other sources. The jottings concerning tribes from Cabinda to the far south of Angola are too vague to be used in ethnological work with confidence.

There are many points on which the work of A. Schachtzabel should be consulted for the purpose of making comparisons with my
[621] own observations. The chief of these are a note and photograph on
[287] village construction (p. 130); the musical bow (p. 32); the loom
[175] (plate VI); transmigration of the soul of a chief into an animal (p. 51);
[524] and the game of mancala (p. 52). My observations of initiation at
[84] Katoko, Ngalangi, and Cangamba agree well with that of Schachtzabel at Katoko, but I was able to obtain more detail and more
[293] numerous photographs of the ritual of initiation. The spinning of cotton (p. 143) is exactly the process so frequently witnessed now at Elende. Iron-working (p. 111) appears to be comparable with the technique at Elende, but Schachtzabel seems to have missed the ritual. I was not so fortunate as this author in finding the old type of iron-smelting furnace in use.

114 The work of Statham is devoted primarily to hunting and descrip-
136 tions of plant and animal life. The chapter given to a casual description of people among whom he passed is not useful as ethnology; but the book is of service in providing a background of natural history. Information on the tsetse fly in Angola (p. 294) assists ethnological work by showing the determining effect of this biological factor.
[231] Presence of the fly is prohibitive to cattle-keeping, therefore cattle are not kept along the river courses which are infested with this pest.

114 Alexander Barns made no pretence of writing more than a travel book; nevertheless he publishes photographs of ethnological value, gives useful historical summaries, and deals with economic problems of production and transportation.

114 Tucker's book "Drums in the Darkness," though written to
175 interest the American public in mission work, contains many ethnological statements. The chief of these relate to the structure of the compound (p. 37); the dress of women (p. 69); naming of twins and triplets; and other items which agree well with data from the district in which I worked. There are notes on drum signals (p. 74) and
[202] cannibalism (p. 77). Apparently drum signals were in use at Bihé half a century ago. Forty years ago a slave was killed and eaten
[264] at the installation ceremonies for a new king, a point that was noted

IV. PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

142 Among the Ovimbundu there are two main physical types. One of these is of brown skin color and slender build. In this type the calves and thighs are poorly developed, and the chest girth is slender in keeping with the general development. In general the physical 144 characteristics are distinctly different from those of a typical West African Negro as represented by the Kru and the Ibo tribes.

The Ovimbundu are Bantu Negroes who possibly result from a crossing of Hamites and true Negroes, a hypothesis which would account for both the light-colored slim type and the shorter, darker, more sturdy type. But E. Torday (Herbert Spencer, Descriptive [114] Sociology of African Races, London, 1930, Preface, p. iii) thinks that differences of physique among Sudanic and Bantu Negroes are sufficiently accounted for by isolations and environmental differences. Torday denies the need for postulating an infusion of Hamitic blood, but his opinion is opposed to that which has found general acceptance.

The darker Ovimbundu with more facial hair may represent an infusion of Vachokue blood because there was warfare between the Ovimbundu and the Vachokue of eastern Angola with the result that some of the latter were taken as slaves. Types of the Ovimbundu are shown (Plates LII–LIV).

• 101 The Vasele, an Umbundu-speaking people of west-central Angola, 142 form a linguistic and cultural pocket because of their isolation in [304] rugged country. Their physique shows no pronounced differences from that of the Ovimbundu, but the methods of scarification, tooth mutilation, and personal ornament are in distinct contrast with those of the Ovimbundu. The Ovimbundu have only a V-shaped notch in the two upper central incisors, whereas the Vasele chip all their teeth to points (Plate LXXVI, Figs. 1, 2).

[302] The Luvando of southwest Angola resemble the Ovimbundu in general physique, though the great difference in hairdressing and personal ornament is likely to give a contrary impression (Plate LIX, Figs. 1, 2).

The Vahemoca are particularly well developed (Plate LXII, Figs. 1, 2). Not until Mongua is reached does one find a people who are distinctly different from the Ovimbundu in all respects. The Vakuanyama of Mongua are noticeably tall and slim, much taller and slimmer than the Ovimbundu, while their physiognomy is more refined (Plates LXIII; LXVIII, Fig. 2). The Vakuanyama are a pastoral tribe whereas the Ovimbundu are principally agricultural.

3: Hambly E-5 (1929-1930) 1934 FP13 Mbunda FP13

The picture of types gathered at 'Ngalangi (Plate LXXXIX, Fig. 3) shows, reading from left to right along the back row, then along the front row in the same direction: an Ocimbundu; an Ocivokine; a man of the Vangangella; an Uluchazi woman; a Lunda man; and two types of the Vangangella.

The M'Bunda man and woman photographed at Cangamba display characteristic deformation of the upper central incisors (Plate XCI, Figs. 1, 2). Photographs of a Mussorongo man and two women, taken about a hundred miles east of Malange, show no great difference from the Ovimbundu except in their shorter stature (Plates LXX, Figs. 1, 2; LXXI, Figs. 1, 2). The Bushman (Plate LXIX, Figs. 1, 2) shows a type found wandering in small bands in the south of Angola. These photographs were taken at Caconda.

The dress and personal ornaments of the tribes dwelling to the south of the Ovimbundu (Plates LIX–LXVIII) are entirely different from the clothing and decorative styles observed in the areas occupied by the Ovimbundu. This statement is true with regard to bodily covering, ornaments, tooth mutilation, use of pigment, scarification, and hairdressing.

In respect of all these factors, males and females of the Ovimbundu have distinctive patterns which do not appear to have influenced, or to have been influenced by the styles around them.

In working southward from Elende I passed through typical Umbundu cultures until the vicinity of Kipungo was reached. At this place the change in physical appearance, ornaments, and hairdressing was remarkable both for its abruptness and distinctiveness. But the change from agricultural to pastoral pursuits is gradual.

A comparison of photographs indicates at once the truth of this statement, which can be further illustrated by a detailed description of the ornaments observed from Kipungo to Mongua.

By far the most important of these is the circular onbo shell made from the basal part of a gastropod shell of the genus *Conus* Linn; and allied forms. These are highly prized, not because of any intrinsic worth, but on account of strong sentiment arising from their bequest, which is usually in the female line. I have, however, seen a few males of the Vakwanyama wearing these shells. For the old onbo shells monetary offers equal to the earnings of a woman for a period of six months were made, but without success. One woman wavered somewhat, but finally decided that she dared not return to her home without her onbo shells. From a Portuguese trader I bought, for a small sum, onbo shells showing stages in manufacture.

4:Dorsey E-4,5 (no date)1899 FP13 Mbundu FP13

THE OCIMBANDA, OR WITCH-DOCTOR OF THE OVIMBUNDU OF PORTUGUESE SOUTHWEST AFRICA.

114 In July of last year the Anthropological Department of the Field Columbian Museum secured an ethnological collection from the Ovimbundu of the Portuguese African province of Angola. The collection was made by Rev. T. W. Woodside, a missionary for seven years among the Ovimbundu, and, on account of its completeness and the full data which accompanied the objects, is of unusual [121] importance and value. Perhaps of chief interest among the series of objects illustrating the various phases of native life in this region is the complete "medicine chest" of a witch-doctor. This I shall describe, making free use of the extensive notes furnished by Mr. Woodside, supplemented by several conversations during which the objects themselves were discussed, and much information furnished concerning the Ovimbundu in general. The collection under consideration was obtained from a single individual, and has seen long use.

101 The Ovimbundu are a southern division of an extensive group of people known as the Bundas, who, in turn, belong to the group of Bantu populations. They occupy the territory of the Bailundu and Bihe plateaus, from Benguella to the Quanza River, a table-land 4000 to upwards of 6000 feet high, and in south latitude about twelve 142 degrees. The Ovimbundu are described by Mr. Woodside as a dark-skinned people, varying from coffee-brown to quite black, with thick curly hair. They are entirely uncivilized, but are a peaceable, 105 kindly people. Their food is chiefly vegetal, although they possess cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and chickens. They practise polygamy, and the women prepare the food and do nearly all the field work. The men are famous as traders, and journey to the interior for rubber, wax, ivory, and slaves; the latter they secure by purchase from the country of the Lubas. The principal medium of exchange is a cheap cotton cloth which is obtained from white travellers.

791 Among the Ovimbundu, as in nearly all parts of Africa, the 759 witch-doctor is an important personage. He is feared by all classes, and often has more influence and power than the chief himself. Whenever anything is lost or stolen, they apply to the witch-doctor [761] to find out where the object is, or who is the thief. As no one is supposed to die a natural death, the doctor is called in to discover the witch who caused the death. To him they go for all kinds of charms to protect themselves against all evils, or to cast a spell on some one whom they wish to injure; to him they also go for help in

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30) 1934 FP13 Mbundu FP13

OCCUPATIONAL RITUAL, BELIEF, AND CUSTOM AMONG THE OVIMBUNDU

By WILFRID DYSON HAMBLY

[114] WHEN leader of the Frederick H. Rawson-Field Museum Expedition of 1929–30 one of my chief objects was the assembling of a representative collection of the arts and handicrafts of Angola, and particularly of the Ovimbundu who occupy the Benguela highlands.

[177] The Ovimbundu have been in contact with Europeans for three centuries at least, therefore I was interested to know to what extent daily avocations had become secularised. That a close connection has existed between the sacred and the profane in Negro tribes is well known, and the influence of spiritual beliefs and magical acts in every department of economic life, including agriculture, hunting, fishing, and handicrafts, has been established. But how durable is this dependence of economic life on magical acts and ancestral benediction? How soon does primitive economic life become commercialized on a European pattern?

Other observations of academic interest and practical value relate to division of labor between the sexes, specialization by age and natural aptitude; also the possibility of some callings being of an hereditary nature.

[101] My observations, which were made chiefly in the regions of Bailundu, Elende near Cuma, and Ngalangi, are conveniently classified under the headings of food supply, handicrafts, medicine-men, and education.

FOOD SUPPLY

824 825 At the foundation of economic life is nature lore, which among the male population of the Ovimbundu is so detailed and extensive that the knowledge has given rise to a large vocabulary. The highly specialized acquaintance with trees, plants, birds, mammals, and reptiles on the part of most of the men was a surprise to me. Such information was commonly shared by males, and was in no way peculiar to the professional hunter.

I was easily able to collect a list of fifty birds which are readily distinguished by boys (who shoot them with blunt wooden arrows), and all men seemed familiar with forty species of trees, whose timbers, barks, and fruits were distinguished and named. Boys were exceptionally well acquainted with small mammals; including several kinds of rats and mice, which are trapped, boiled, and eaten. For Field Museum I made a collection of snakes and lizards; a task which again showed the native power of observation and adequacy of vocabulary. Some reptiles, whose re-

5: Hambly E-5 (1929-30)1934 FPI3 Mbundu FPI3

containing the head and attaching it to a pole by which it was supported on the shoulders of two bearers. Then followed a series of questions from the village chief (sekulu), and answers were supposed to be given through forward or backward swinging of the pole. A forward swing was affirmative, and a backward swing was negative. I have seen this procedure followed with a coffin supported as described, and the questions related to the cause of death.

The head of a king would be asked, "Do you want an ox for sacrifice? We will give you one." "Do you want a new skin for your head? We will give you one." Such was the ceremony for bringing spiritual aid to what was otherwise a commercial undertaking.

A wooden figure of a female decorated with black feathers was an indispensable part of the equipment of a medicine-man who accompanied a caravan. When in doubt with regard to the path he knelt at the parting of the ways and consulted the figure. Replies came in a falsetto voice attained by plugging his nostrils. Horns containing a mixture of fat, charcoal, and other substances were carried so that they might be planted near a camping ground to drive away thieves and leopards. These horns are still used and are obtainable.

At the present day a belated Ovimbundu, who fears the sun may set before he reaches the next village, will take some earth from an ant hill. This earth he places in the fork of a tree saying, "O sun wait for me a little while."

Examination of the culture of the Ovimbundu, combined with observations on the Umbundu language and somatic traits, indicate that the Ovimbundu are a part of the Bantu peoples of southwest Africa. They have, however, taken advantage of the open Benguela highlands to develop their system of agriculture far beyond that which is usually carried on by Negroes in forest clearings.

In agricultural work a clear division of labor is observed. Men clear timber and burn the bush, after which hoe cultivation is in the hands of women, though men assist with the harvest. Unmarried girls help in the fields and each has a piece of ground whose products are the cultivator's personal property. This gives unmarried girls a measure of economic independence. Usually a girl spends the proceeds of her work in buying trinkets and palm-oil for personal decoration. Under their system of polygyny each wife has her own field, utensils, and a separate hut with its fire and cooking arrangements. The husband visits each hut for four consecutive nights, though in some districts there is a seven night cycle. Men always take evening meals in the men' council house (onjango) in the center (to notice the tombs of hunters, which consist of cairns of stones enclosing a)[1]

[1] [Printer's error: This sentence refers to p. 159. -- Analyst]

6:Edwards E-5 (1955-1956)1962
FP13 Mbundu FP13

INTRODUCTION

The Ovimbundu[1] of central Angola appear under various names[2] in narratives by nineteenth and early twentieth century travellers in West Central Africa. In the present century three anthropological studies have been written about them by Childs,[3] Hambly,[4] and Hastings,[5] as well as two shorter studies by Bastos[6] and Santos Brandao,[7] and a large number of articles.[8] Despite the large amount of documentation available there existed a considerable number of gaps, especially as regards the political system and the kinship system.[9] In proposing to work among the Ovimbundu, I hoped to be able to fill in these gaps, and in particular to provide a study of what appeared to be a double-descent kinship system. I also hoped to study the reactions of an African society to Portuguese rule.

I arrived at Nova Lisboa in roughly the centre of Umbundu country in October 1955. Here, as in Lisbon, I was told that it would be very difficult to find an area where the traditional social life of the Ovimbundu as described in the literature

[1] A plural from the singular Otjimbundu. The adjective and the name of the language is Umbundu. The Ovimbundu people are entirely distinct from the Kimbundu people of northern Angola and the two languages are not mutually intelligible. However, the confusion between the two has gone so far that both Europeans and Africans speak of the Ovimbundu people and language as Kimbundu and of the true Kimbundu as Kasundengo.

[2] Mambari, Nano, Ovimbali, and so on.

[3] G. M. Childs, *Umbundu Kinship and Character*, Oxford, 1949.

[4] W. D. Hambly, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1934.

[5] *Ovimbundu Customs and Practices* (unpublished thesis) 1933, D. A. Hastings.

[6] Trabaos Geraes sobre a Etnografia do Districto de Benguella in *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, 1906, pp. 3–13, 44–56, 81–93, 133–40, 169–76, 193–207.

[7] Articles in *Mensario Administrativo* (Luanda) March–April, July–August 1950, and Sept.–Oct., Nov.–Dec. 1951.

[8] See Bibliography.

[9] For an examination of the ethnographic material as it then was, see Merran McCulloch, *The Ovimbundu of Angola*, Ethnographic Survey of Africa. International African Institute, London, 1952.

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114 could be observed. Eventually I decided to work in the Bimbe
121 area, in the extreme north-western corner of Umbundu country.
184 The census[10] indicated that Bimbe had a smaller white popula-
[062] tion than any comparable area of Umbundu country, and people who knew it considered that it was one of the areas most likely to retain a relatively conservative social life.

114 In Bimbe I settled in the village of Epalanga in the chiefdom
121 of Gumba. The advantage of Gumba lay in the conservatism
184 for which its people were noted in other chiefdoms; its dis-
101 advantage lay in its proximity to the northern boundary of Umbundu speech and culture, which led me to collect some items of ethnographic information not typical of Umbundu country.[11] On the whole, I am satisfied that the people of Gumba were in the past as in the present Ovimbundu in both speech and way of life.[12]

121 Many of my discoveries were at first negative ones. I could not find any evidence that there was a double system of kinship groups actually in existence; the villages were not composed of agnatic kin; the chief seemed lacking in power. Nor was it easy to obtain detailed information about the past even from old
181 men. There is little interest nowadays in history, nor are the old social institutions regarded, even by those who once participated in them, as being necessarily better than those of the present day. The reason for this attitude seems to lie in Umbundu social psychology with its readiness to accept European authority and
121 values. Interesting as the motivations behind this attitude are, this 'cultural amnesia' caused me much disappointment. I found it much easier to get texts on the caravan trade, and on ceremonial practices and proverbs, than on the political and kinship systems. The inadequacies of the information I received on the political system may be explained by the fact that Gumba is on the fringe of the area tributary to the old kingdom of

[10] Of 1950.

[11] The payment of fines by a man to his dead wife's kin had been formerly
[602] practised in Gumba, and still is further north. It does not seem to have been known in living memory elsewhere in Umbundu country.

[12] The northern limit of Umbundu speech is now somewhere to the north of the administrative post of Cela. As there has not been substantial migration from the south, it is reasonable to assume that it is many years since the Gumba–Cela boundary was also the language boundary.

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175 century gives a broadly similar account,[9] among other information giving us the titles of some of the Umbundu ministers, thus Mani-Curio resembles Mwekalia, and Tendala Tjandala.[9] In the same period the Jagas appear in what is now southern Umbundu country.[10] According to Baumann[11] and Estermann[12] they raided and conquered some of the south-western people of the Nyaneka-Humbi group. At the end of the eighteenth century the Jagas and the Ovimbundu still formed distinctive [101] groups, and in the nineteenth century the word Jaga was still used to refer to the Umbundu rulers.[13]

Ethnologists have shown much interest in the question of the origin and subsequent travels of the Jagas.[14] Battell tells us that in a Jaga camp of several thousand persons there would be only twelve or fourteen persons who were of original Jaga stock, the rest recruited *en marche*.[15] There is some evidence to show that the core of some at least of the Jaga hordes were Lunda from the kingdom of Mwata Yamvo. Thus the Imbangala people of Cassange[16] claim to have originated from the migrants from the Northern Lunda kingdom. Both Battell at the beginning of the seventeenth century and Pinheiro de Lacerda at the end of the eighteenth tell us that the Jaga called themselves Imbangala.[17] The Hungarian explorer L. Magyar collected in the

[9] J. B. Labat, *Relation historique de l'Etiopie occidentale*. Paris 1732. (Translated from the Italian original of Cavazzi.) For the Jagas see Vol. II, pp. 88–303. On infanticide see pp. 114–15, which states that all children born inside a camp and male children born outside a camp were put to death. Presumably female children born outside a camp were spared. Cadornega states that a woman was forbidden under pain of death to give birth in a camp. Is this simply a purification taboo which Battell mistook for a rule of general infanticide? Battell seems fairly reliable, and it is possible that there had been a change of custom between Battell's contacts in about 1600, when the Jagas were simply nomadic raiders, and Cadornega's contacts of about 1670–80, when they were ruling settled states. There is some evidence for such a change in Cavazzi-Labat, who dates it around 1648.

[9] Childs, p. 187.

[10] Ibid. p. 195.

[11] H. Baumann, *Paideuma*, April 1936, pp. 118–51.

[12] C. Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola* Vol. II (Lisbon 1957), pp. 26–29.

[13] Childs, p. 188 and sources cited there.

[14] Ravenstein, Introduction; Childs, pp. 181–90.

[15] Ravenstein, p. 33.

[16] F. Travassos Valdez. *Six Years of a Traveller's Life in Western Africa*, London, 1861. Vol. II, Chapter V.

[17] Ravenstein, p. 84; P. M. de Lacerda in *Annaes Maritimos e Coloniaes* 3a serie, p. 486 ff.

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and the European population greatly increased.[28] In some areas at this time a confused situation arose, in which 'robber barons', white and black, tyrannized over chiefs and villagers and engaged in the still vigorous slave trade, which now had acquired a few disguises on the coast.[29]

In 1911 the rubber trade ended, and about the same time slavery and the slave trade were effectively suppressed.[30] From this time onwards, too, civil administration began to be effective and the Benguela Railway became the most important link between the coast and the interior.[31] The trade disappeared, powers of the chiefs declined. The missions, both Catholic and Protestant, which had relatively little influence during the rubber trade period, gained more and more converts.[32]

2. *Ethnography*

Between the Ovimbundu and the sea lie the Hanya, the Nganda, and the Tjisanji tribes of whom little is known except that the Hanya and Nganda seem to be culturally related to the Ovimbundu.[33] To the south are the Nyaneka-Humbi group, cattle-keeping peoples who are culturally and linguistically related to the Ovimbundu, but who did not participate in the trade.[34] To the east lie the Ngangela[35], the Luimbi, and the

[28] Childs, pp. 210–11.

[29] For an account of Umbundu country at this time see H. W. Nevison, *A Modern Slavery*, New York, 1906. In Gumba I was told that Mutu-ya-Kevela the leader of the 1902–3 revolt had raided villages for slaves but that Samakaka whom Childs (p. 22) describes as a robber baron was spoken of favourably.

[30] Slavery had been legally suppressed from 1878. The slaves were called by other names but no effective change was made till 1910. See A. Bastos, *Monografia de Catumbella* in *Bol. Soc. Geog. Lisboa*, 1910 (pp. 74–81, 103–9, 141–55, 180–5, 225–8, 251–5, 279–5).

[31] Childs, p. 228.

[32] Ibid., pp. 220–23. Personal information.

[33] Ibid., p. 8.

[34] On these peoples see Estermann, *Etnografia do Sudoeste de Angola*, Vol. II.

[35] A tribe using this word as the root of the tribal name is to be found to the south-east of Umbundu country in the area round Vila Artur de Paiva. Padre A. Van Horrik, formerly of the Missão Católica de Cubango, tells me that the map contained in M. McCulloch, *The Southern Lunda and Related Peoples*, (London, 1951) should show the Ngangela as occupying much of the area actually assigned to the Mbwela and the south-eastern Ovimbundu. Mbwela does not seem to be the name any tribe uses for itself (Private information, Estermann and Van Horrik).

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Chokwe.[36] These people are culturally and linguistically different from the Ovimbundu, whom, however, they have influenced, especially in the fields of ritual; the initiation rituals typical of these people have spread into southern and eastern Umbundu territory.[37] The Ngangela call the Ovimbundu 'Ovimbali', a name used in Angola for Africans who live with or imitate whites.[38] I have heard an Otjimbundu use it for the Kimbundu of northern Angola. The south-western peoples call the Ovimbundu 'Va-Nano—they of the north',[39] but also regard the Ovimbundu as being 'civilized'. Very little is known about the peoples to the north of the Ovimbundu, who are also different in language and culture and who are said to have more rituals than the Ovimbundu. These are known collectively by the Ovimbundu as Olongoya, a term with a rather offensive meaning. Historically they are important for the Ovimbundu since it was here that Andrew Battell knew the Jaga hordes, and Umbundu tradition links a number of the chiefly lines to these northern peoples. The Umbundu language seems to be gaining ground in this area.[40]

All the neighbouring peoples seem to be matrilineal, as regards descent, inheritance, and succession, with the exception of the Hanya and the Nganda, who have (Dr. Childs suggests) a double-descent kinship system, as traditionally the Ovimbundu had. All seem, as far as is known, to have had chiefs,[41] though there were no kingdoms to equal the power of Bie and Bailundo in the nineteenth century. Culturally the Ovimbundu seem to have been ready to take over traits from neighbouring tribes, and the Portuguese, and this particularly in the sphere of ritual.[42]

[36] For the Luimbi, see C. W. Scott. 'A Note on the Luimbi of Central Angola', *Africa*, October 1933. For the Chokwe see M. McCulloch, op. cit.

[37] Childs, pp. 115–16.

[38] A trader said that Otjimbali means a domesticated black. Estermann is preparing a study of a Mbali group of southern Angola descended from Kimbundu slaves.

[39] The Nyaneka-Humbi tribes use it for the southern Ovimbundu, the southern Ovimbundu use it for the northern Ovimbundu.

[40] Childs, pp. 186–7; Baumann, op. cit.

[41] Baumann, op. cit. For the installation of chiefs in the Amboim area, see Antonio de Silva Maia, 'Ritos e Ceremonias para a Entronização' in *Mensário Administrativo*, July–August 1953.

[42] Childs, p. 220.

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[1874-1911]

THE OVIMBUNDU UNDER TWO SOVEREIGNTIES

178 The great distinguishing mark of the Ovimbundu was their participation in the caravan trade. Some of the neighbouring people also engaged in trading journeys (e.g. the Chokwe) but in central Angola the dominant traders were the Ovimbundu by reason of their control of the routes to Benguela and Catumbela, a control which as Livingstone's narrative shows they tried for a while to turn into a monopoly.[43] With this must be linked 177 the greater readiness of the Ovimbundu to adopt European ways, marked by the general adoption of cloths for wear by at latest the mid-nineteenth century.[44]

3. *Economics and Social Structure*

101 This section will describe the economic life and social structure which marked the period of the rubber trade (1874–1911). 436 A genuine currency existed in the form of cloth, and fortunes 439 could be made in it. Serpa Pinto tells us of one Otjimbundu who made £3,500 by trading in the interior and that he had met many men who 'turned over capital of a thousand to twelve hundred pounds sterling',[45] presumably in trade goods since Portuguese currency did not circulate among the Ovim- 361 bundu. At the capitals of the kingdoms genuine towns grew up. Magyar in the middle of the nineteenth century estimated that [162] 5,000 people lived at Bailundo[46] and the British explorer Cameron who had crossed Africa from Zanzibar says of Ekovongo, the capital of Bie, 'the town of Kagnombe, the largest I came across during my whole journey, being more than three miles in circumference. On arrival I was met by the 444 Kagnombe's secretary, chamberlain, and captain of the guard who wore red waistcoats as a sign of their dignity. The secretary was more ornamental than useful, being unable to write, but a subordinate, a black man and native of Dondo, was better educated and conducted the trade of Kagnombe with the coast'.[47]

[43] Ibid., p. 205.
[44] Ibid., p. 206, referring to Magyar as evidence.
[45] Serpa Pinto, pp. 161–2.
[46] Magyar, p. 391.
[47] V. L. Cameron, *Across Africa*, London, 1877. Vol. II, pp. 206–7.

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CHAPTER II

THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

In modern Angola, an Overseas Province of Portugal,[1] the Ovimbundu form the most numerous of the African peoples, with their million and a half of population,[2] and have also the reputation of being industrious—especially the Ovimbundu of Bailundo.[3] Their homeland, the Benguela Highland, has also been of importance in the modern economic development of Angola.

On the narrow strip of coastal plain stand three cities[4]—Lobito, Catumbela, and Benguela. Both Benguela and Catumbela knew the rubber trade; Lobito was founded in the early part of this century as the coastal terminal of the Benguela Railway which runs through Umbundu country and beyond the Congo frontier and thence to Elisabethville. The Benguela Railway is the economic backbone of the Highland. On it are the cities of Nova Lisboa and Silva Porto and a string of smaller trading towns. Traders from the Bimbe area drove regularly down to Vila Nova, one such trading town on the line, a distance of a hundred and thirty miles or so to sell maize, and buy trade goods and African villagers knew that along the railway maize sold for better prices and clothes were much cheaper.

[1] This term was used for nearly a hundred years up to 1933 when the term Colony was adopted. In 1951 'colony' was dropped in favour of the old term.

[2] Estimate made in 1953 by Mr. Theodore Tucker then of the Missão Evangelica de Dondi.

[3] Galvão and Selvagem, op. cit., pp. 364–5.

[4] A city receives its title through official recognition. The 1950 census gives Nova Lisboa as having a higher 'civilised' population (7,382 of whom 4,736 were white) than any city except Luanda. The total population has been estimated at 60,000 (Egerton, p. 199). Estimates given me in 1953–6 suggested that Nova Lisboa has some 6,000 'civilised' persons and 20,000–30,000 natives. Lobito has fewer civilised persons but may have a larger native population of perhaps 30,000.

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switching to Umbundu or Portuguese for addressing an African, whereas Portuguese is the language used at the Catholic missions even between non-Portuguese.

The African Catholic priests then have approximate equality and identity of status with their white confreres within the hierarchic framework of the diocese of Nova Lisboa; the Ovimbundu pastors lack this equality and identity but instead possess greater independence and opportunities for leadership within the Umbundu Native Church, which functions as a partly autonomous body.[19] The difference in functions of the priests and pastors is related to the ultimate aims of missionary action; for the Catholic missions the establishment of a local clergy is part of the complete incorporation of Ovimbundu into the universal Church; for the Protestants the establishment of a local clergy is part of the building up of a totally independent local church.

I attempt later in this work to show what roles the missions play in social life among the Ovimbundu and in the relations between the 'civilized' and native population. Here it should be noted that it is the missions rather than commerce or the Government which have opened status-giving positions to the Ovimbundu. The clergy have higher statuses in the total Angolan society than do any other of the *assimilados*. They combine this high status *vis-à-vis* the Europeans with leadership in groupings which include the ordinary villagers, unlike the various welfare societies in which the *assimilados* associate.

So much then for the general pattern of cities, communications, and trains, of administration, missionaries, and traders. I now turn to the particular features of the neighbourhood where I lived. Bimbe is said to derive from the name of a princess (Mbimbi) who ruled as a vassal of the king of Ballundo.[20] Here at the beginning of this century Samakaka, a

[19] The missions provide supervision and specialist services including agricultural instruction, community development, education, and health. Village work and actual pastoral activity is the responsibility of the Native Church. For an account of such specialist services see M. F. Cushnahan, *Missionary Doctor in Africa*, New York, 1944 and A. Strangeways in *African Women* (June 1956).

[20] Information obtained locally from 'civilized' people. Princesses were very rare among the Ovimbundu, though Childs notes that Bambos (Bambu) had a woman ruler early in its history (p. 176).

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'robber-baron', established himself[21] and in 1904 there was a minor rising against the Portuguese[22] (not to be confused with the very extensive Bailundo war of 1902–3). In 1908 the government post was founded for Bimbe, and in 1928 the Catholic Mission was established at the point where the Bailundo Mission had the furthest flung catechetical school in that direction. In 1927 the first trader had settled at Chicunda.[23] The areas under the mission and the post do not coincide, but it may be said that Bimbe is the territory bounded on the west by the River Cuvo or Keve and on the east by the main road from Bailundo to Gabela. The southern boundary of the post ran roughly on a line between the post and the Ponte Salazar (which bridges the Cuvo (or Keve) and takes the road into Cassongue), and the northern boundary is formed by a parallel line drawn from the road some way to the south of Cela to the river. In 1956 the post of Bimbe was divided; much of the western part including the Mission was placed under a new post Luvemba.

Chicunda is twenty kilometres beyond the mission, and seven kilometres beyond Chicunda a turning from the main track brings one to the village of Epalanga. Keeping on the track, a further bifurcation, say two and a half kilometres on, gives a track to the left which leads to a small leper colony, and a track leading straight on and sharply upwards to the village of the chief of Gumba.

This village lies at the summit of a sharp ridge which rises up from the ordinary level and then drops abruptly to a neighbourhood inaccessible to motor transport, which forms the greater part of the Gumba chiefdom. The boundary on the other side is a river across which lies Cela.

Such is the lay-out of the area studied. It is up in the north-western corner of the Umbundu country, indeed down by the Mission, people said that the people of Gumba were not Ovimbundu really but 'Olongoya', as the peoples to the north are termed. Many of the people in Gumba had come from

[21] Childs, p. 22.

[22] Information obtained locally. I did not see official records.

[23] Information obtained locally.

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was a man of fifty or more, who lived in Portuguese style making money from coffee and other crops. He claimed to be an *assimilado* (African with the status of a Portuguese citizen) but in actual fact he was not one. He had employed a man called Kusumula, who lived in Epalanga and was the brother of Kapapelo's wife.

To appreciate the point of Justino's complaint, it is necessary to explain the significance of certain terms indicative of ethnic and social status. Otjimbundu is the singular of Ovimbundu, a people defined by the use of the Umbundu language. It is also used to refer to any black person (thus I was often asked whether there were Ovimbundu [*i.e.* Africans] in England), and is therefore equivalent to the Portuguese *preto* (black), which when used of a person has a rather pejorative sense like 'native' in other parts of Africa. Livingstone, writing a hundred years ago, remarks of one area in Angola: 'The people under him (the chief) are divided into a number of classes. . . . They are also divided into gentlemen and little gentlemen, and, though quite black, speak of themselves as white men and of the others, who may not wear shoes, as "blacks".'[1] Justino's complaint was that Sapapula had referred to him as a *preto qualquer* or in Umbundu (Sapapula did not speak Portuguese), *otjimbundu tjange*, a mere black.

Justino delivered a speech when the people from Epalanga had settled on the veranda of his house in which he declared with much force that he was not an Otjimbundu '*Ame otjimbundulo*.' This accusation was based on information given him by Kusumula, who alleged that Sapapula had said to government headmen that Kusumula could be recruited for road work, as he worked not for a white (a term applied also to *assimilados*) but for a mere black.

I give the main lines of the ensuing argument. Sapapula denied that he had called Justino a black. Kusumula claimed that Sapapula was always picking on him. Sapapula declared that he had founded the village, and that Kusumula wanted to break it up. Kapapelo said that he had at one time given medicine to a girl and Sapapula had told Jaime to kill him because he might have seduced her. Kutenga Lussae, the chief

[1] Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches*, p. 511.